

Application No. 09/973,303

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the means for reading a recorded shelf-life limitation information, the means for electronically recording the shelf-life limitation information in an electronically readable and storable form, and the means for communicating the electronically recorded shelf-life limitation information, are all accessible to a point-of-sale terminal. Claim 1 has also been amended to recite that the shelf-life limitation information is communicated from the means accessible to the point-of-sale terminal to a home terminal which is accessible to a purchaser of the one or more product items.

Nothing in Colella teaches or even suggests these limitations. In Colella, expiration date information is scanned and entered into a drug dispensing machine (DDM) to allow a central pharmacy computer (CPC) to place an inquiry of the expiration dates of all of the drugs within the DDM. (See Col. 5, lines 9-21). Colella, however, fails to teach or suggest point-of-sale terminal that has means for reading, electronically recording, and communicating shelf-life information to a home terminal as is recited in claim 1. Even if the purchaser of the products may be deemed to be the medical staff using the CPC as is contended by the Examiner, the CPC is not a home terminal that receives the recited shelf-life limitation information from a point-of-sale terminal.

Claim 35 has been amended to recite a "first terminal coupled to the scanner, the first terminal configured to receive the scanned product indicia and search the data store for the associated shelf-life limitation information, the first terminal further configured to provide the shelf-life limitation information to a purchaser of the product item in an electronically readable format; and

a second terminal accessible to the purchaser of the product item, the second terminal configured to retrieve the shelf-life limitation information of the product item provided by the first terminal for managing use of the product item." As set forth above,

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Colella discloses that expiration date information is scanned and entered into a DDM for allowing the CPC to place an inquiry of expiration dates of the drugs within the DDM. Nothing in Colella teaches or suggests the recited first and second terminals. Even if the purchaser of the products may be deemed to be the medical staff using the CPC as is contended by the Examiner, the CPC is not a second terminal that receives the recited shelf-life limitation information from a first terminal, the first terminal receiving scanned product indicia and searching a data store for an associated shelf-life limitation information.

Singer similarly fails to teach or disclose the limitations of claims 1 and 35. There is nothing in Singer to teach or suggest the point-of-sale and home terminals recited in claim 1, or the first and second terminals recited in claim 35. Accordingly, claims 1 and 35 are now in condition for allowance.

Claims 3-9, 34, and 36-38 are also in condition for allowance because they depend on an allowable base claim, and for the additional limitations that they contain.

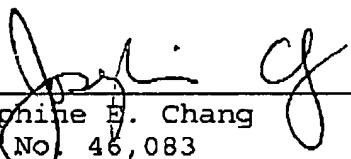
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, reconsideration and an early indication of allowance of claims 1, 3-9, and 34-38 are respectfully requested.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "Version with markings to show changes made."

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

1. (Twice Amended) A system for controlling product items with shelf-life limitations comprising:

means for determining shelf-life limitation information for each of one or more product items;

means for recording said shelf-life limitation information for each of said one or more product items;

means accessible to a point-of-sale terminal for reading said recorded shelf-life limitation information for each of said one or more product items;

means accessible to the point-of-sale terminal for electronically recording said shelf-life limitation information for each of said one or more product items in an electronically readable and storable form.

means accessible to the point-of-sale terminal for communicating said electronically recorded shelf-life limitation information for each of said one or more product items to a [microprocessor] home terminal, the [microprocessor] home terminal being accessible to a purchaser of said one or more product items for managing use of said one or more product items based on the shelf-life limitation information.

35. (Amended) A system for controlling product items with shelf-life limitations comprising:

a data store storing shelf-life limitation information for a product item;

a scanner scanning a product indicia associated with the product item;

a first [processor] terminal coupled to the scanner, the first [processor] terminal configured to receive the scanned product indicia and search the data store for the associated shelf-life limitation information, the first [processor] terminal further configured to

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provide the shelf-life limitation information to a purchaser of the product item in an electronically readable format; and

a second [processor] terminal accessible to the purchaser of the product item, the second [processor] terminal configured to retrieve the shelf-life limitation information of the product item provided by the first [processor] terminal for managing use of the product item.

36. (Amended) The system of claim 35, wherein the first [processor] terminal is configured to store the shelf-life limitation information in an IC card accessible to the purchaser of the product item.

37. (Amended) The system of claim 35, wherein the first [processor] terminal is configured to store the shelf-life limitation information in a store server accessible to the second processor over a data communications connection.

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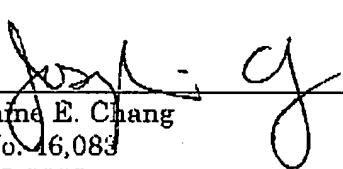
Amendment Transmittal Letter
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The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees under 37 CFR 1.16 and 1.17 which may be required by or to give effect to this paper to Deposit Account No. 08-1728. Please show our docket number with any charge or credit to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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